

P 092003Z JUL 87
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8227
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 09309

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E.O. 12356: N/A

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SUBJECT: FARC PUBLICLY REJECTS DISARMAMENT

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: THE FARC GUERRILLA HIGH COMMAND ON JULY 7 PUBLICLY REJECTED "DEMOBILIZATION OR DISARMAMENT" FOR ITS FORCES, CLAIMING FURTHER THAT IT HAD NEVER PROMISED SUCH ACTION. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) FARC-UP IN ARMS: IN A RADIO PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 7, TOP LEADERS OF THE COLOMBIAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES (FARC), COLOMBIA'S LARGEST GUERRILLA GROUP, ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD NOT DEMOBILIZE OR DISARM THEIR FORCES. FOLLOWING THE JUNE 16 CAQUETA AMBUSH, THE GOC STATED THAT ANY FURTHER SESSIONS OF THE PEACE PROCESS WOULD BE LIMITED TO DISCUSSIONS OF THESE TOPICS. FARC COMMANDERS ADDED THAT THEY HAD NEVER PROMISED DISARMAMENT: "NEITHER AS A POLICY NOR IN RESPONSE TO THE AGREEMENTS OF LA URIBE, WAS THAT SPOKEN OF." FARC COMMANDER MANUEL MARULANDA, "TIROFIJO" (SURE-SHOT), SPOKE, AS DID HIS DEPUTY AND CHIEF IDEOLOGUE JACOBO ARENAS, AND ALFONSO CANO. THE BROADCAST REPORTEDLY ORIGINATED FROM A SOUTH BOGOTA SITE AND WAS TRANSMITTED ON VARYING FREQUENCIES.

¶3. (U) UNREPENTANT: THE FARC LEADERS INSISTED THEY WOULD REMAIN INSIDE THE TRUCE WITH THE GOC, BUT ADDED THAT MORE INCIDENTS LIKE THE RECENT CAQUETA AMBUSH COULD WELL OCCUR, BECAUSE OF "MILITARY PERSECUTION." THEY REVEALED THAT THEY HAD SPOKEN THE SAME DAY TO THE GOC USING THE "HOT LINE" TELEPHONE FROM THEIR HEADQUARTERS AT LA URIBE AND HAD MADE 19 COMPLAINTS, MAINLY RELATED TO ALLEGED GOC MILITARY OPERATIONS NOW UNDERWAY AGAINST "VARIOUS FRONTS" OF THE FARC. THEY CLAIMED THAT THE CAQUETA INCIDENT WAS THE RESULT OF MILITARY OPERATIONS, EVEN THOUGH "FOR THE SAKE OF DISCUSSION" THEY WERE WILLING TO USE THE WORD AMBUSH. THEY POINTED OUT THAT SIMILAR GOC-GUERRILLA INCIDENTS HAD OCCURRED UNDER THE PREVIOUS (BETANCUR) GOVERNMENT, BUT HAD BEEN OVERCOME BECAUSE THE DESIRE TO DO SO EXISTED -- INSTANCING THE AMBUSH AND DEATH OF 22 FARC GUERRILLAS IN ANTIOQUIA AT THE HANDS OF GOC MILITARY.

¶4. (U) STRIKE NOW; TALK LATER: FARC LEADERS ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD ATTEMPT TO ORGANIZE (PRESUMABLY USING THE PATRIOTIC UNION, THE COMMUNIST-FRONT POLITICAL PARTY) A NATIONAL PROTEST STRIKE TO "REESTABLISH THE LA URIBE ACCORDS." THEY COMPLAINED THAT THOSE ACCORDS HAD NEVER BEEN PROPERLY CARRIED OUT, SINCE THE "POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REFORMS CONTEMPLATED THEREIN" HAD NEVER BEEN CARRIED OUT. THEY INDICATED CONTINUED INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOC, BUT SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEND A HIGH-LEVEL COMMISSION TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS; THAT THE (BETANCUR-ERA) COMMISSIONS OF DIALOGUE AND VERIFICATION SHOULD BE REESTABLISHED; THAT DIALOGUE SHOULD NOT BE DEPENDENT ON PRIOR CONDITIONS (LIKE THE GOC'S INSISTENCE ON TALKING ABOUT DISARMAMENT); AND THAT THE "ATMOSPHERE" DID NOT CURRENTLY EXIST FOR TALKING ABOUT DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION.

¶5. (LOU) WHAT DID THE FARC PROMISE? RAFAEL PARDO, SECRETARY OF POPULAR INTEGRATION AND ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENTIAL PEACE ADVISOR CARLOS OSSA ESCOBAR, TOLD US THAT THE 1984 LA URIBE ACCORDS, AND THE 1986 RENEWAL,

IMPLY DISARMAMENT, AND DIRECTED US TO THE RELEVANT ARTICLES. IN FACT, THE LANGUAGE OF THE SECTIONS HE SUGGESTED IS VAGUE ENOUGH TO SUPPORT VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS. ARTICLE 6 OF THE 1984 ACCORD SPEAKS OF A ONE-YEAR PERIOD FOR THE FARC TO "ORGANIZE ITSELF POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY." "DURING THIS PERIOD THE GOVERNMENT WILL UNDERTAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO REESTABLISH CIVIC ORDER IN THE ZONES OF VIOLENCE." ARTICLE 3 OF THE 1986 RENEWAL SAYS THAT THE FARC WILL PARTICIPATE IN PEACEFUL ELECTIONS "WITHOUT PHYSICAL, MORAL OR ECONOMIC COERCION." ARTICLE 6 OF THE SAME TEXT CALLS ON THE FARC TO INTENSIFY ITS INCORPORATION INTO "POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE AND PRODUCTIVE CIVIC ACTION, SO THAT WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME ITS ADHERENTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN FULL INSTITUTIONAL NORMALITY."

COMMENT

16. (LOU) THE GOC FEELS THAT PARTICIPATION IN PEACEFUL ELECTIONS WITHOUT RESORTING TO ARMED INTIMIDATION -- AND "INCORPORATION INTO FULL INSTITUTIONAL NORMALITY" -- ARE MEANINGLESS WITHOUT DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION. THE FARC CLAIMS TO SEE NO CONTRADICTION, AND IS LIKELY TO INSIST ON A LITERAL READING OF THE ACCORDS, WHICH DO NOT USE THE WORDS DISARMAMENT OR DEMOBILIZATION.

17. (LOU) ANOTHER STEP IN THE DECLINE OF THE TRUCE AND PEACE PROCESS. THE FARC'S MAIN CONCERN, AS WE SEE IT, WAS PROBABLY TO SCORE POINTS IN THE ON-GOING BATTLE TO FIX BLAME FOR THAT DECLINE.

GILLESPIE